



National Park Service
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Effigy Mounds
National Monument

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Effigy Mounds News Release

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3rd Annual Prairie du Chien Bald Eagle Appreciation Day

Mark your calendars, winter has finally arrived and Prairie du Chien will soon host Bald Eagle Appreciation Day. Come and enjoy bald eagles and the other wonderful natural resources of the Upper Mississippi River on Saturday, February 3, 2007 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This event will run concurrent to the 57th Annual Fisheree; bald eagle activities will be centered along the Mississippi River at the location of the Prairie du Chien Chamber of Commerce offices on the grounds of the Wisconsin Welcome Center, 211 S Main Street, and the adjacent AmericInn Lodge and Suites. Complimentary hot beverages will be available at the AmericInn.

Winter bald eagle viewing is a great way to introduce yourself to the amazing year-round outdoor recreational opportunities of the Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin & McGregor / Marquette Iowa region along the Upper Mississippi River.

Bald Eagle Appreciation Day will offer outdoor viewing of bald eagles through spotting scopes and other educational opportunities for families and outdoor enthusiasts – including live bald eagle programs, eagle and raptor exhibits and presentations, children's craft activities, a life-size eagle nest replica, eagle drawings by Prairie du Chien students, and artwork and photography by local artists. Birding experts will be on hand at the primary event locations; maps and information related to other nearby bald eagle watching locations will be available for those interested in self guided eagle watching field trips.

In addition to wild eagles in view along the river, live bald eagle programs will be presented by Mary Beth Garrigan, Director of the National Eagle Center in Wabasha, Minnesota, at 10:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in the lobby of the AmericInn. These live bald eagle programs will be preceded at 9:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. by "Bald Eagles at Home on the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge," presented by McGregor District Manager Tim Yager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Eagle related artwork by Ed Lawrence, eagle photographs by Don Valley and eagle sculptures (in wood) by Ally Spurr will be on display throughout the day. As part of the Annual Fisheree, ice sculptures will be located at the AmericInn and other Prairie du Chien locations.

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Prairie du Chien is nestled on the banks of the Upper Mississippi River, home to the largest concentration of wintering bald eagles in the lower 48 states. Not only can one see bald eagles throughout the winter, bald eagles can be found year round on the Upper Mississippi River. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Upper Mississippi River Refuge is believed to host more eagles and nests than any other refuge in the United States, excluding refuges in Alaska. Nearly 100 active bald eagle nests were counted and an estimated 79 eaglets were produced from those nests within the McGregor District. In 1972, there was only one known eagle nest on the whole Upper Mississippi River Refuge.

During the Annual Fisheree and Bald Eagle Appreciation Day, visitors to the Prairie du Chien area can enjoy countless opportunities for recreation, relaxation and rejuvenation. The Wisconsin Welcome Center is located within walking distance of downtown Prairie du Chien shopping and restaurant establishments, and short driving distances to shopping, lodging, entertainment and dining amenities located along the routes to the nearby parks and wayside locations within the national wildlife refuge.

As with other regional Mississippi River communities, the Prairie du Chien area offers excellent bald eagle watching opportunities. The event locations are within the McGregor District, the heart of the 261-mile Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge, in close proximity to Prairie du Chien's La Riviere Park, Wisconsin's Wyalusing State Park, Iowa's Pike's Peak State Park, Clayton County Iowa's Osborne Nature Center and Effigy Mounds National Monument. The remarkably high concentrations of year round eagles combined with the multitude of nearby natural and scenic bird viewing locations, winter hiking trails, magnificent bluff top views, and nearby amenities make the Prairie Du Chien region one of the best places to view eagles in their natural surroundings all year round. There is nothing like seeing an eagle soar close by a scenic overlook of the Mississippi while hiking on a bluff top, a sight delighting more and more visitors to these local parks.

Winter hiking is available along miles and miles of trails located within these great parks and wildlife areas. Ancient American Indian mounds situated along the trails are at their most captivating covered by a pristine blanket of snow and magnificent bluff top views of the Mississippi River offer visitors a serenity unmatched during the busy summer. For history buffs, exterior views of all five of Wisconsin's original National Historic Landmark designated sites (1960) are located within walking distance of the bald eagle day locations in Prairie du Chien – including Villa Louis and the Astor American Fur Company Warehouse on St. Feriote Island and Ft. Crawford Medical Museum on South Beaumont Road.

Bald Eagle Appreciation Day is a collaborative project of the Prairie du Chien Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Council; partner agencies providing staff and expertise include Effigy Mounds National Monument, Wyalusing State Park, Pike's Peak State Park, Wisconsin DNR, Iowa DNR, Upper Mississippi Wildlife & Fish Refuge, Upper Iowa Audubon Society and Osborne Nature Center. The AmericInn co-sponsors the event as one of the host sites.

For more information call (800) 732-1673 or visit www.nps.gov/efmo and www.prairieduchien.org/first/visitor/bald_eagles.htm